

## **2001 Eckhart Tolle Omega Retreat Beneath World Drama There is Peace Part 2 of 2**

[Speaker 3] (0:00 - 1:46)

The body. I got along with you talking or sharing how the conditioned mind stops us from being in presence. And what I observe is that the body, physically, is constantly evaluating situations, judging, so to speak, this feels good, this feels bad, this is pleasurable.

And that is before, often, not always, before I perceive that there is a conceptualizing taking place. Or you asked us to observe nature, to learn from nature. And what has already been concerning me also for a long time is when I observe animals who are living bodies like we are, they are not conceptualizing, I guess, but like they are judging, they are fighting for dominance or territory.

So I feel like it's not only somehow the conditioned mind that seems to spark up duality for whatever it means in the end, but it is something physical also. And the third facet of that that really is close to me that when there is a trauma early in life, it seems to be a physical memory, it's before the concepts of thinking start, it's like a reflex, it can dominate your life, but it's not really a thinking. So this is my question concerning the body.

[Speaker 8] (1:47 - 1:48)

Thank you, thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:59 - 20:27)

The body carries a lot of, inherits, because it is inherited from the past, the DNA contains the information from the past, carries a lot of the stuff that is connected with the condition, the condition of separateness, of being a separate me. So that is already carried almost in the cells of the body, one could say. The pain body I mentioned is already in you before thinking starts.

The pain body is already there. A baby already comes into this world with an accumulation of past history in the body, of past suffering in the body. And some babies you may have found cry a lot, other babies cry relatively little, and that's to do with the density of the pain body.

So when things happen, often that deep-seated conditioning is already operating in you, but it is connected with the mind. It is the outcome of thousands and thousands of years of mind identification and seeing yourself as a separate entity, a me. Animals, if you look at animals you see compared to humans, they live in a world that is free of problems.

They don't carry the heaviness of a personalized sense of me. And yet, yes, they are involved in fights. Animals have their limitations.

An animal can express love mostly only towards its offspring, except animals that live very close to human beings. So animals have their own limitations, but when you look at the natural world, you see both things. You see great harmony, which is true.

There is the harmony of the totality. You see also animals living in a problem-free state, but occasionally they go out and fight and kill. And then they walk again, or they sleep, or they rest.

And then there's another, perhaps two males fighting for dominance. So they enter the periods of struggle and fight, but don't carry it around as a me. So I describe in the book, I observe ducks swimming in the water, and occasionally they get into a fight for some reason.

Perhaps territorial. They also need a little bit of space around. And then they separate, flap their wings a few times, stand up on the water, and swim off in opposite directions.

And then they swim just like Forrest Gump runs. When they swim, they go. And the past is immediately relinquished.

Yes, there is struggle there too. It's not animals. Every animal has its limitations.

An animal is deeply connected to the source, hasn't gone out that far, but also experiences the condition of separateness. But nothing is separate from your consciousness. So whatever you see on this planet is not totally separate from your consciousness.

So as your consciousness changes, you may find changes in nature taking place also. If your consciousness is a fearful state, your state of mind is one of fear and struggle for survival, you see the reflection of the fear and the struggle for survival everywhere. And there is a strange saying in the Bible and other more recent so-called prophecies, the lion shall lie with the lamb, and other prophecies concerning animals, that as humans undergo a shift in consciousness, animals also undergo a transformation.

To a large extent, when you observe animals in their, yes, not state of complete perfection, they also, they don't suffer, because to suffer you need a self who suffers. But they go have pain, they go through pain. A lot of pain, of course, is inflicted on them by humans, but they also go through some pain inflicted by other animals, no doubt.

And yet, there's great, a great balance in the totality of nature, in the animal kingdom and the totality, there's great balance. And there is, despite what seems like disharmony when one animal kills another and eats it, there is a harmony that pervades the whole, the totality of nature. And if you look at the individual animal, you can still learn a great

deal from it, even though it has its limitations.

See how 90% of the time the animal is at ease with itself and its surroundings. Some animals are continuously alert, because there could be an enemy somewhere. So there are birds in a continuous state of alertness, but that is not fear.

When you watch a bird, to learn about animals you need to watch, and you learn a great deal that a bird is continuously going, and it's not a state of fear, it's simply a state of alertness. So, I'm not, I don't want to idealize the animal kingdom, because yes, it has a downside, and anybody who owns a cat, well, nobody owns a cat, but... Anybody who is owned by a cat, knows, you taste the polarities.

It's this beautiful creature that lives, when it walks, such harmony, such flow. When it rests, it rests completely. Many artists have painted an animal and cats at rest, that shape itself, such harmony.

When it looks, moves into a new territory, it stops, it pauses, it looks, it doesn't hurry, it just goes, before it jumps, it looks, and then you can see, it's already, it imagined itself there, and then the body follows. And then it comes home, and it tears apart a beautiful bird, and your whole living room is full of feathers, it's dreadful. It doesn't need the bird, it gets plenty of food, and yet, it cannot help it.

It is compulsively driven to attack the bird, or the mouse, or the rat, or the squirrel. Compulsively driven, it cannot get rid of half a million years, or a million years of conditioning, because for a long time it lived on these creatures, it can't get rid of that. So even seeing a bird, its mouth quivers.

Somebody visited me, I had three cats at some point, and that cat had just caught or killed a bird, and that woman picked up the cat and said, You shouldn't be doing that! And the woman had come to me for a counseling session, she couldn't get rid of deep-seated forms of conditioning. Only 40 years, and the cat a million years.

So there's always the two sides to the animal kingdom, there's great beauty and harmony, but if you look at humans, many humans are in a continuous state of disharmony and non-ill, what's the word, unease with their surroundings, they are not in alignment with life, they don't fit in, as animals do. In that sense, animals still express a greater wholeness than humans, despite the shortcomings, the limitations of their form. And so I would say you can still learn a great deal from watching the animal kingdom.

Reactions, the question also touched on, some reactions that you have seem to come before thought processes start, some reactions seem to be prior to thought processes. And that is the conditioning of the body, conditioned for thousands of years by thought, into a state of fearful contraction, which is, everybody carries a pain body, and therefore everybody lives, it's normal, so it's hard to detect, because everybody has it, almost,

everybody lives in a state of fearful contraction. The state of fear is already in the DNA, if they could examine exactly what is in the DNA, there would be a lot of information about, you better be fearful.

The body has already built in fear, and fear is the predominant energy field of each pain body, even if it seems to be predominantly angry, or it seems to be predominantly sad or heavy, you can still see fear is always an essential ingredient of the separate state of being. So when people are born already with fear built into the structure of the body, and that is what reacts, and that is how do we get rid of that deep-seated conditioning. And then, of course, there's the mind, and they feed each other.

The fear that is already in the inherited pain body energizes fearful mind structures, and the fearful egoic mind structures give fuel to what is already in the body. So that vicious circle, how do we get rid of so, so much conditioning, collective conditioning that goes back such a long time, simply through knowing it, watching it as it arises, being alert enough so that it doesn't trick you into becoming something that it is not, which is a person, a projection, a story, so that you can observe it directly. That's why sitting here in this energy field of presence is the greatest thing you can do to dissolve conditioning, not that you are saying, I am dissolving my conditioning.

It is being dissolved through presence, the arising of presence, and the remaining conditioning will then come up, will even accelerate, come up, more of it will come up all at once, and you can watch it in the body. So having attention in the body is essential because the bodily reactions you can then watch, and no more is needed than to place your attention on it, that spaciousness that knows it's there, so when something happens, a situation happens, and you might remember, okay, say yes to this moment, that's important, and you say yes. But then you feel inside the body, and you may realize, oh, I've said yes, mentally and verbally, and yet my body is still saying no.

So this is important because that, when we speak of yes and no as an inner state and a way of being with things, it's important that you should not overlook a deep-seated no that may be inside your body as a contraction or a tightness. And up here you might be saying yes, and the body all the time is saying no, and here you might say, oh, I've forgiven this situation completely, there's nothing left, and you're not in touch with your body, and you can feel it's tight all over here, or wherever it is. And then, oh, maybe the forgiveness hasn't seeped into the cells of my body.

Maybe the no hasn't gone that deep yet, and all that is needed is for you to accept that it's not here yet, oh, it's not here yet, there's still a no in the body, it's interesting. Not feeling that I need to get rid of that, but simply saying that's how it is, it's still there. And then feel it, sense it, the contraction is still there.

Oh, and don't need to draw conclusions, I haven't made it yet. So whatever is there as presence arises, it will come to the surface, whether it is in the body or whether it is

mind, the two go together, whether it's the inherited conditioning of the body, part of the human condition, it will come up, situations and challenges will bring it out. And the more presence arises, the more quickly these things will emerge, but you can take it.

Life knows exactly what you can take, and as presence arises, life says it's time to accelerate. And that's happening even collectively, there are great collective challenges. It's time for this acceleration to happen.

So being with the body, there is a covering, there is the pain body, there is the conditioning that's in there, and so to speak, underneath it is what one person suggested we should call the joy body, and that is there underneath a million years of conditioning. And so as human consciousness becomes transformed, perhaps the animal kingdom will go through a transformation too. But humans need it more desperately than the animals.

The animals would be fine for another million years and the planet would be happy with them. Humans won't be fine for another hundred years and the planet won't be happy with them.

[Speaker 6] (20:33 - 21:14)

Thank you. You've answered most of the questions. Thank you for being here, Eckhart.

Thank you. My question concerns practice. When we first start and the presence arises, it seems that it's covered over very quickly.

And if you want to look at it from the point of the pain body, it seems that the reservoir is endless. Is each of these arisings cumulative? Does it make the next one more probable or does the old soul have to go on the road again?

[Speaker 1] (21:17 - 21:21)

Could you repeat that, please? The whole thing?

[Speaker 6] (21:22 - 21:43)

No, just the last question. Is the arising of presence cumulative? In other words, does each one, when you have had the experience, make the next experience more probable?

Or does, I said, the old soul have to go to the road again and make all the actions again in exact order?

[Speaker 1] (21:47 - 29:19)

It does get easier. Presence intensifies. Often, for a while, the challenges also intensify as presence intensifies.

But at times it seems I'm falling back. I'm falling back into my old state of consciousness.

I was present for a while and now some challenge has pulled me back into a state I thought I'd left behind long ago.

But that's only temporary. Once presence arises, it can be obscured, but you can never go back to the old mind identification. The momentum of presence is already there.

It may be if your mind conditioning, mental-emotional conditioning, has great density and the clouds come back. There was sunshine, the clouds parted, and then the clouds come back. If you need some disaster, some loss, some breakdown, then it will happen to you so that presence can manifest more freely through you.

But you are here to make that unnecessary, except in those cases where it's still necessary. You don't need to ask, when am I going to be free? We need to be careful not to create some future state or goal that we need to achieve.

For example, to become free of my pain body. I'm waiting. When?

And there's more stuff coming up. But you've only perhaps been conscious of your pain body for a year or two or five or ten, which is not a lot. It's been there for thousands and thousands of years.

So it is happening fairly quickly. But even to ask, how much longer do I have to live with my pain? Don't create a state that you need to arrive at.

Be with your pain and let it be. It's not that bad. It's there, yes.

Don't label it even. Allow it to be. That's the power of surrender.

Often the mind can come in and say, when, when, I want to be free. You're free already. You can be free even if there's still pain operating in you.

If the pain is no longer mistaken for who you are, is no longer made into a personalized sense of self, a me, you can be free and yet periodically you may still carry your pain body. And it may get triggered and you recognize it as the pain body. But it's not who you are.

It doesn't become a story in the head. It does not energize thought patterns in the head, egoic mind patterns. It doesn't turn into an unhappy me.

It's simply leftover pain. And you carry it and what you do with it by allowing it to be, it's no longer you're not doing it for yourself. It doesn't really matter anymore to you when you become free of the pain body being an unhappy me.

The work that you're doing is you are dissolving human pain. And it's far more than, it seems you're just doing it for yourself, but the repercussions are much faster than that. One human being dissolving his or her pain has an enormous effect on the rest because

all humans, everything else but humans, are connected with each other at a deeper, there is one organism, one collective human psyche.

And whatever happens, happens within that one collective human psyche including us, including you, surrendering when the pain arises and allowing it to be and saying, that's what is. It is as it is. Let it be.

And so there is a spaciousness that is suddenly there. And that is what is arising in the collective organism, the collective psychic organism of humanity. This group is an essential part of that.

And then there's the terrorists. Total insanity, extreme manifestations of an undercurrent of insanity that is in the whole of humanity, extreme manifestations of that, killing themselves and thousands of people in extreme acts of madness that is also ultimately not outside of you. And so whatever happens within you has enormous effect on the rest of humanity.

You're not in it for yourself. So enjoy the adventure of disidentifying from all that conditioning, the arising of presence, asking the question, how much longer can only obscure presence? Presence is intensifying, it is accelerating.

I know that. And the more you stop asking how much longer, or do we have to go on indefinitely, the more quickly it accelerates because the more, as you drop that question, you relinquish future. Let go of future, looking to future as that which is going to solve your pain, your problems.

It's not... So how much longer? I respect your question.

Many people have that question. I've been asked it many times. But ultimately, asking yourself that question isn't helpful because it can easily lead to the next thing, which is a complaint.

The next thought after asking that question, well, do I have to go on and on with that pain? Just be with the simplicity of this, of this moment. And whatever it is that arises, be okay with that.

[Speaker 8] (29:20 - 29:20)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (29:21 - 31:09)

It is as it is. That is already salvation. And so you don't need the future for salvation.

Trust that the present moment is all you need and realize the enormous power that is there. And many thoughts will arise in the mind that are perhaps cunningly designed to

take you out of the now. They may be very logical, sensible thoughts or questions, but they are designed to take you out so that you can look to the future and then live in an unsatisfactory present again.

So it's important. See how the mind has great intelligence Ultimately, the intelligence is only a small part of the one great intelligence. And the egoic mind often uses its intelligence to perpetuate its own temporary form as the egoic mind.

So it can be quite clever, and it can trick you very easily, always back to now. You are already, as a beautiful line in the Course in Miracles, it is at this moment that salvation is offered to you. And it is at this moment that you can accept it.

No other time. And that is the truth. This moment.

[Speaker 8] (31:11 - 31:16)

I accept it. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (31:21 - 31:43)

My name is Michael. I realize that I may be leaving the room before you answer my question because I have a flight I have to take and shortly after 4.30 I may be leaving. So I want to say that I'm not interested in the answer if you're still talking and I leave.

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (31:44 - 31:48)

It won't be. It's not your pain body driving you.

[Speaker 2] (31:50 - 34:29)

I was just one of the founders here. I called him about a year and a half ago in Indonesia when I was having a very difficult time with the business I work in there. I would read your book at night and it would be a wonderful way to go to sleep and I called him and I said, you must read this book and he did and contacted the people necessary to bring you here.

So I'm just happy to have played a part in that and also the timing of you being here after what's happened and so many of us, this being the largest gathering, I'm hopeful somehow that something will generate from this group. I'm not hopeful. I sense it will already.

And there are two things that I wanted to ask about. One is I was on the roof of my apartment on that last Tuesday and I saw the trade centers and watched the South



Tower go down and I've been very shaken by this and in a way, well, it looks like flashbacks. I always wondered what the Vietnam veterans, why they just couldn't get over these flashbacks, why they were so screwed up somehow.

And I don't think, I have never been in a combat zone, so seeing this was very similar. Almost as I'm asking this, I can feel that it's just, it's the mind staying busy with these pictures and I still wanted to mention it because there's in a way all this appreciation for the fragility and the vulnerability that I feel and so much crying and just this morning I mailed a package, a small package in the post office and it said you must have identification to mail a package and I thought, oh, how sad, we have to do this. And when I asked the postal lady if she would like to see identification, she just looked into my eyes and said, oh no, she just knew.

And then I said something about what I had seen and we were both crying and so I never thought I'd be in a post office crying with a postal worker, especially postal workers. And so I see so much beauty coming out of this and the kinds of things people are saying here. And yeah, maybe I've answered my question just to see that the beauty is so, so much more than...

[Speaker 9] (34:30 - 34:30)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (34:30 - 36:42)

And the other thing is maybe this real, is perhaps an answer to this, is that last night I was in the dining hall with my friend Alan who also works here and I was asking him about his family and he said that his mother passed away recently and she had had Alzheimer's and she was 79 and I said, oh, well, when did she get it? And he said when she was 59. And I went, oh my God, what am I doing?

I'm just so indulging in these emotional depressions and feeling lonely and I felt this just lightness. Okay, I'm so grateful not to have Alzheimer's. And I went and sat down to the most beautiful woman I could find in the dining hall and I said, hi, I'm Michael, I'd like to meet you.

And I had a wonderful time meeting her and later I said, I don't know if you're married or gay or have a boyfriend, but I'd like to meet you again. And she lived in Atlanta. And she said she was with someone and I felt no disappointment.

It was just, oh, this wonderful connection happened. And the same thing this morning. There's a very lovely woman here in the room who I just, I felt very shaky to go up to her and she might say, get away from me.

But no, we went to the lake and connected so deeply just in a space of silence and I said

something about a girlfriend I've been on and off with and she pointed to her finger and said, oh, well, I'm married. And somehow none of that mattered. And there's just, I feel like this friendship, somehow a friendship, a connection, not needing to be followed up by anything other than the meeting.

And the question is really, is a technique. I feel like I've now got this technique called, oh, you're grateful not to have Alzheimer's, so just go out and meet everybody on the planet. And not just beautiful women.

[Speaker 8] (36:45 - 36:46)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (36:46 - 36:47)

Thank you.

[Speaker 8] (36:50 - 36:52)

That's helpful. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (36:58 - 40:37)

But I'd also like to thank you because if it weren't for you, although there's nothing personal in it, it happens that we are here, we wouldn't be here at this time if you hadn't sent the book to your friend. So none of us would be here at this time. It's all connected in such ways that you could never work out through your mind how deeply everything and everyone is connected.

Thank you. And many people connect it at a deep level with others here, not man, woman, woman, woman, man, man, who knows. Ultimately that is just the form identity and so that attraction may be there or may not be there.

But there's a deeper connection here beyond form, beyond name and form. I forget most names of people I meet and yet I meet them very deeply. I very much feel whenever I meet, I know them.

I don't remember the names and yet it is always holy. The meeting is always sacred. And when you're not coming from an egoic sense of self, the beautiful thing is you neither want something from somebody nor do you fear them because in all normal egoic human interactions, you either want something from the other human being or you fear that they might do something or say something or injure you in some way or diminish you in some way.

So most human egoic interactions are governed by these two movements of wanting. And again, the form, you may feel an attraction on the level of form and yet feel the

deeper connection beyond form at the same time without feeling, oh, I shouldn't be feeling this attraction on the form level, I should be beyond that by now. No, as long as you are here as a form, you might on that level, you may feel an attraction and it's not, it's to do with being here as a physical form and yet there's something far deeper than that operating now.

So when you're here only as a person, as my friend Katie says, personalities don't love, they want something. They may be pretending that they are loving you but they want something, the personalities, the persons. Or they fear something.

So it's how wonderful to go beyond that and for the first time truly be with another human being and the reality of that other human being beyond fearing or wanting.

[Speaker 5] (40:52 - 41:57)

It has been my experience that as you say, when I am sufficiently quiet, the answers to my questions arise inside me. In this current situation, I haven't been quiet enough for that to happen and I'd appreciate your help. I have very recently separated from my partner of many years.

During this retreat, grief and anger have arisen many times, thoughts and feelings together. I catch it and I think there it is, the pain body feeding itself with this story again or something to that effect. Sure enough, even as I observe and accept the phenomena, it dissolves almost as quickly as it arises.

Suffering ends almost as quickly as it begins. My concern is that I may be using this practice to avoid feeling painful feelings that are simply part of being human.

[Speaker 8] (41:57 - 41:59)

Thank you, thank you.

[Speaker 1] (42:02 - 48:57)

That's an important question. In many ways, what we call being human is being trapped in the egoic condition. So there are many states that we have been calling human that we are going beyond.

The characteristic of being human until now has been that you manifested insanity to a greater or lesser degree. The human condition has a strong element of insanity. But here, allowing a feeling completely is actually the opposite of not feeling it or wanting to be rid of it or terminating it before it has come up fully.

No. Allowing it to be is the opposite of saying no to it. There is no greater state of openness than to say to any feeling, I'll let you be here, you are here, and that's how it is.

Not the slightest rejection of it. But the miracle is, it dissolves when it's accepted completely. Now, it doesn't mean that you kill it.

And it doesn't mean that you eliminate anything. It's simply the energy that was that feeling, was in a form, loses its form as that feeling. And in many cases, immediately becomes presence.

The feeling may arise again, perhaps created by further thought. And the same thing happens. It's immediately allowed and is transformed into presence.

So nothing is denied. The feeling is there for as long as it needs to be there. But the beautiful thing is, it doesn't need to be there that long anymore.

It does not need to be perpetuated. It's there and then it dissolves. And then, as you live in the state of presence, to a large extent, things that would be called very human feelings don't really happen that much anymore.

Intense anger with situations and people, reactivity, depression moving from happy one day, unhappy the next, depressed, you're the greatest one day, the next day you're the most awful, the most dreadful, miserable one that ever existed. And all these things that are so normal, all the dysfunction in relationships, the continuous need for conflict, many of those things will be dissolving. It doesn't mean that you become less human, because you become more human, because what replaces that is a deep sense of oneness.

Love, compassion arise and are there a lot of the time, if not continuously yet. And those are the deepest feelings or emotions that they are so deep that I don't call them emotions. They are part of what in India is sometimes called your natural state of inner connectedness with being.

And so you don't become less human when suffering and dysfunction gradually leave you. You do not become less human, you become more fully human. Suffering leaves you, pain lingers for a while.

The difference between pain and suffering is suffering needs an entity, a me with a story. Pain lingers. The grief that you feel, at first you experience it as suffering.

The moment you accept it, the link between a story in the head and the pain is broken and all that remains is a pain. And even that you might not even label pain anymore. It's simply a feeling and it's accepted.

So you're becoming more fully human, not less human. If negative feelings were leaving you, those so-called negative feelings that don't feel good, feelings that cover up your natural state of connectedness with being, if they were leaving you but you were becoming deadened to the world around you, no light shining through you, no compassion, empathy, love, complete openness towards all human beings, that would be

an illusion. You would be deadening yourself, desensitizing yourself.

And what this is about is the opposite of all that. It's a complete opening. So welcome to becoming fully human.

It's a question of how we use words. We can say we are now becoming fully human. Yes.

I call it the flowering of human consciousness. Or we could choose other words and we could say we are going beyond the human condition. We are stepping beyond that.

It's simply a question of how you want to use words. But the main thing is that you see the difference between denying or cutting yourself off from feelings and thereby having the illusion that you don't have them anymore and fully saying yes to them. You see the difference.

[Speaker 5] (48:57 - 49:01)

I do. Yes. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (49:01 - 49:01)

Thank you.

[Speaker 7] (49:08 - 49:39)

In the place of accepting all that is without resistance, I notice that there is a place in me that is not as motivated to take action. And it could be from being willing to stand up in front of an audience and ask a question or voting or writing a letter to the editor or any number of things. So my question is what keeps the passion and motivation alive in the place of acceptance?

[Speaker 1] (49:40 - 1:01:24)

Thank you. Good question. Now you may have noticed that there is great passion in what I do.

And action that arises out of presence is energized and very effective action. One could say there is great passion, there is great energy in action that arises out of presence. There can also be great energy in action that arises out of fear, out of anger, out of some form of resistance to what is.

There can be enormous and qualitatively a very different energy field. It is true perhaps that you said you find yourself perhaps there is a tendency observing a tendency in yourself of doing less as presence arises. Not so often does action happen.

A lot of the action that comes out of the egoic state is really unnecessary. A lot of the hyperactivity of our Western civilization, and most of the planet is covered now by

Western civilization, a lot of the hyperactivity that is, are all those things truly necessary for a full human existence? If you look at, and of course if you look at all that, life in big urban centers, the continuous running around, everybody is under stress, but everybody is engaged in what they believe to be very important things.

But there is a fear because you are never quite catching up with the next important thing that you need to do. So there is a running around that, a lot of energy, yes. A lot of unhappiness also being created through that.

A lot of people creating living hell for themselves and it becomes so normal that they don't know it anymore. And as presence arises, the motivating factor for taking action changes dramatically. It's not that action becomes no longer possible or that you are no longer capable of action, although I must admit it happened to me for a couple of years.

I went into complete beingness of presence. I lost the ability to take action, not that I saw it as a loss, but other people saw it as a loss in me. I had no guidance, so I got overtaken by presence and nobody could tell me that you can still be active.

Gradually I learned for myself that presence can be a state out of which very effective and passionate action happens, but probably it will be far fewer actions that come out of presence than actions, all the myriad activities and actions that come out of the state of resistance, of the state of no, that need to arrive at the future desperately because I haven't found myself yet, driven by fear, the fear of being nobody, the fear that you might not make it, the fear of survival, the fear of not enough, driven by that, creating perhaps a huge enterprise and just as you create it, you die of a nervous breakdown.

And all the people associated with your great enterprise are unhappy. So it looks great when you look at it, and then look at the inner state of the people inside, they're all driven. Is there an ease?

Is there an aliveness? Are they flowering as human beings? No.

So that is what I call karmic action. Karmic action arises out of a denial of life, of what is, it's resistant, induced, motivated by resistance and needing the future. And then you have action that arises out of presence.

Karmic action creates more karma, in other words. It arises out of suffering, ultimately, and creates more suffering. The energy behind it is the energy of suffering.

Karma means action, actionary action, actionary action. So that is karmic action. Ultimately, any action that is a means to an end is karmic action.

Any action where the outcome is more important to you than the doing now is karmic action. And that is the action of most of humanity, with a few exceptions, of course. Something else is arising.

So that's important to know, the difference between action motivated by presence and karmic action. Whenever the now is denied its primacy, the primacy of the now and the fullness is not recognized, it's reduced to a means to an end, any action then is karmic and produces more suffering in yourself and others who come into contact with that kind of action. But you may be an extremely busy person, of course, in that state, and most people are.

Then there is the state of presence, and only necessary action arises out of that. You mentioned some examples, writing a letter to a newspaper, and you could very well write a letter to a newspaper from a state of presence, rather than a state of perhaps great anger about a situation. And from a state of presence, you can show them how you see that from your point of view of presence, and there will be great power in what you write.

It won't make other people angry too, and thus contribute to more, because imagine you write an angry letter, maybe fully justified, because the world is full of things you could get angry about, full, full of things. So you write a letter that is angry to a newspaper, quite a few people read that, and in many of them the energy field of anger will linger as they go to work after reading your letter, which may have been totally right in what it says. You were justified in being angry, just an example, and so, and the next thing, that very same energy field goes into their pain body, and the next interaction at work expresses that anger, and it goes into the next one, the next pain body is awakened.

There was one beautiful episode of, I believe it's called a TV series, Touched by an Angel, I don't want to give you all the details, it's one angry or one person in a state of great negativity, how that person influences the whole sequence of events, one person commits suicide as a result of just that, going into a restaurant, how it spreads to others, and then it's reversed in the second part of that episode, how it could have been in a state of allowing, of non-resistance.

So you can write, then you write a letter which expresses the same, but points to a greater truth, makes people aware of what's going on, because if it makes you angry, it's likely that it will be part of human insanity that is out there, and there's a lot of that. And so it could awaken people into realizing, yes, they can see the insanity, you point it out, but it will be written from a greater truth, a deeper truth, than only getting angry at the insanity. And that will truly make a difference.

So this is just, or you may find it is pointless writing this letter, perhaps the newspaper lives on scandal, perhaps that's the very thing why they sell papers, because they are bought by pain bodies. It's possible. So in many cases, you might see that and say, there's no point in writing a letter to a newspaper.

The best country for that is England. They have the best and worst newspapers in the world. And the worst British papers are really bad.

And they are designed to create negative emotion in the reader. And almost every headline that you read in the morning, you go to the newsstand, and you see, you bastards, or something like that. And millions of people buy and get angry.

The National Enquirer, compared to that, is the highest magazine. So this is just an example. So action happens, effective, but more than just becoming part of what you are complaining about.

So you can point out, and then something deeper will be awakened, in this case, the person who reads the letter. And also in the state of presence, it will be clearer to you whether there is any point in action. The beautiful thing about action rising out of presence is a lot of the action is spontaneous.

And you may find your way of saying or doing something, and you hadn't even thought about it beforehand. You find yourself just getting up and doing it. And it's always just right.

It's never superfluous. It doesn't create more suffering for yourself or others. That is the beauty.

But, yes, it is true, you probably won't be quite as active as in the old state. That's true. But it will be quality action, good action.

[Speaker 7] (1:01:25 - 1:01:26)

Very good. Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (1:01:35 - 1:03:18)

I have found myself over the years sort of compiling this mental list of terrible things to make me unhappy. And so few of them are bad things that happen to me, but I haven't had that many terrible things happen to me. So a lot of them are things I've heard about happening to other people or read about happening to other people.

And I find myself sometimes just walking along perfectly happy and then thinking, I shouldn't be happy because there's this list of all these terrible things in my mind. Or I may wake up in the middle of the night and they'll all start, you know, coming into my mind one by one. And I get very, very, a lot of pain, very grief-stricken.

And when I read your book, I thought after reading what you said, I thought, well, maybe by continuing to go through this mental list, I'm feeding my pain body with these thoughts. So at that point, I started... I mean, the thoughts still came up and there would be that initial pain, but I didn't compulsively keep going through with the list and eventually the pain would dissipate, as you said.

But I've always not been completely sure if this is the right thing. And then this morning



you said something that confused me. You were talking about how one might want to contemplate the events of last week and feel the pain come up if it came up and allow it, and then perhaps this shift would occur.

So now I'm wondering, well, maybe I should be contemplating this list of things. I'm not sure what the difference is.

[Speaker 1] (1:03:18 - 1:16:11)

Oh, right. Yes. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Basically your practice was the right one.

You observed what the mind was doing. You realized that all those thoughts were feeding your pain body and there could be no end to negative thoughts if you want to have them about your own life even. I could find reasons in my mind, these are just mental perspectives, that prove to me and others that I'm a miserable person and my life is dreadful.

I could prove also, of course, if I take another perspective, mental perspective, that I'm one of the luckiest people in the world and everything is wonderful. I could put a convincing case for both positions and everybody here could do that for themselves. You can convince yourself that your life is dreadful and adopt that position and you select then from your experience all the things that fit in with your life being dreadful, and there will be many.

And then you can choose to think along those lines and the pain body loves it. It gobbles up every thought. And of course then you feel even more dreadful because then the pain body energizes those very thoughts.

It's a vicious circle. It amplifies those thoughts and it feeds on those thoughts and then gives them back to the mind. Or you could think about the state of the world and find a list of why this is the, must surely be the worst planet of all planets in this galaxy, if not all galaxies.

And you might even think perhaps it's a mental home for other planets. Sorry. I may well be right.

But there's no doubt that you could find a long list of why being here is dreadful and you just don't want to be here. But you are. But you can have this long list of dreadful things, one after another, hell, to prove to you that you're living on a planet that is hell.

Not difficult to find that list. Very easy. So you can have those thoughts and continuously revive them and for quite a few years, I think, you said you lived in that way and then you realized what you were doing and realized you were feeding the pain body and

that's exactly what it was.

And then more awareness came to it and then you broke the cycle between thought patterns and pain body and then that went. Now, when I talked about the events of last week, the emotion of these events, the memory of these events is still very fresh and this is a case where we can make a difference. There are certain situations that require healing.

Situations, they may be in your own life, there may be a person in your immediate environment who is ill in one way or another, suffering in one way or another, there may be an immediate event in your collective environment, a great disaster as happened last week that had an enormous ripple effect of suffering going out, even many people suffering who were not immediately connected to it, had great suffering going out, not just this country.

Even my mother who lives in Europe cried and many people suffer and still carry that burden all over the world. So here we have a true immediate situation that you are more or less directly involved in. We are just a few miles, 90 miles or whatever from New York City and it just happens that we are having this gathering close to that place at this time.

So things are deeply connected and there is a reason. So this is something that concerns us directly. It's not some list that you seek in your mind of what's wrong with the world.

This is immediate. And these things occasionally may appear in your own life. Somebody close to you in deep suffering.

And then it is very helpful to hold that situation or that person in consciousness. There is the situation. And although it seems unacceptable if somebody very close to you is suffering deeply, it seems, this can't be, it mustn't be, he mustn't suffer, she shouldn't be suffering like that.

Maybe a child of yours is suffering and a father or mother feels this is so dreadful, he shouldn't suffer like that. But he or she is. The event of last week, things like that shouldn't happen.

But there it is. And then hold it in consciousness. As you hold it in consciousness, there are two possibilities.

You may already be able to hold that situation in consciousness and totally accept the suchness of that situation. That's what happened. Or the suffering person close to you.

Because thousands of people suffering is just a multiplication. That's human suffering. So you hold that.

There is the suffering. And you may be able to accept it so deeply, immediately, that

there is a spaciousness around that person or that situation. And suddenly you sense an inner depth and at the core there is a sense of peace or serenity which so, so many people, as I pointed out a few times, who have faced imminent death have reported that at the last moments they found that great peace and serenity.

Not all, but many, many. Most of them actually found death so they could never tell us about it. And all we see is the dreadful external event, seemingly dreadful.

And so there is that deep peace and that is, the situation is then released. And you stay with that, the peace that you sense. And there is not much thinking in that.

Just that. But if it's not possible for you, and it may not be, because that event was so recent and so drastic and so painful, that when you hold that event in consciousness you cannot immediately accept it totally. So the first thing as you hold that event, or if it's a person, a suffering person in consciousness, the first thing you notice is great sadness.

You yourself suffer with it, with that event, or with that person. And you feel this, it feels heavy and sad. And you may feel like weeping.

That of course is a sign that you resisted what is, but you couldn't accept it. So that's all it is. You couldn't accept that and so you feel that.

And then you move into that feeling, the sadness, and see, that's how it is. There's the sadness. I allow that also.

I allow that to be. The suchness of this feeling. This is what it is.

And then that takes you beyond it. So that is practiced when there are situations around you that require healing, that touch you immediately. If there's anything in the world that touches you deeply, affects you deeply, you can do that.

You can do it for the entire world. You can hold the entire world, this planet, in consciousness. And see the incredible suffering that is taking place at this very moment in many parts of the world.

At this very moment, every second, one or two people are dying. Probably, I think it's two every second. This second, one or two people dying.

Now, now, now, now, now, now, now. Some are in suffering. Some, at this moment, realize who they are beyond form.

And so much suffering being inflicted at this very moment by humans, on other humans, people in hospitals, people who don't even have hospitals, people in prison camps, people being killed at this very moment. It's all happening now, somewhere on the planet. Good things are also happening here.

But you can hold the planet, which, to a large extent, still has a great deal of disharmony, conflict, an enormous amount of suffering. You can hold the entire planet in consciousness instead of going through it, unless something concerns you directly and is immediate. Instead of going through it bit by bit, all the areas of suffering, you would have to spend continuous, all your life in meditation.

Take it as one, and the entire planet and humanity, you see it. And that's how it is. And it's not only that it's suffering now.

It has been going on since time immemorial. And you see that also. And it's going to go on indefinitely unless you become transformed.

And where and when do you become transformed? Now, at this moment. How?

I'm still suffering myself. By accepting the suchness of this moment. Transformation is immediate.

Nothing else can save the world than that.

[Speaker 4] (1:16:21 - 1:16:21)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:22 - 1:19:08)

Thank you. Now, I suggest that the few remaining... Thank you so much.

The few remaining questions we may address tomorrow morning. Listen to that beautiful sound. And just listen.

No need to label it in any way. Just listen to that gentleness. Just the sound.

And the awareness, without which it wouldn't even be there. And that's who you are. The awareness, without which that sound wouldn't be there.

Would anything be there? The whole world is created out of that. And when you know who you are, you know yourself as that.

Quite a harmonious world comes out of that. When you don't know yourself, when you don't know yourself as that, an illusory world comes out of that.

[Speaker 8] (1:21:35 - 1:21:36)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:24:11 - 2:35:00)

Although your bags may be packed, you're still here. And when you sit in the car, driving

home or to the airport, you'll also still be here. You'll always be now, here.

But of course the scenery changes around you. The now is always there. The now is you.

The still point at the center. And then there's the periphery, which is all the world around you. And so you move.

Your physical form is part of all those forms that make up the world, the fluctuating forms of life. And you're there as a still point. Although the physical body may be moving as part of this dance of form that is the phenomenal universe, a continuous dance of form, and your phenomenal physical body is part of that.

So whether you want to or not, that will be part of the dance that continues. But not getting lost in that, in the phenomenal world. Not thinking that anything in the phenomenal world around you matters absolutely.

It only matters relatively. And regarding any form that is in your field of perception, situation, condition, place, person, regarding any form, this famous ancient statement is true, and that is, this too will pass. Fleeting.

That's the nature of phenomenal reality. Everything is fleeting. Even if you've had a long life, you reach the age of 95, and then you look back.

From one perspective, yes, it was a long time. Lots of things happened. And yet it was also so fleeting.

And you might, was it all a dream? All those things, long gone. All those people that I knew.

All those experiences. It's in the nature of a dream almost, because it is so fleeting. Every experience is so fleeting.

And then it's gone. When you get home, you might wake up the first morning after getting home after this. Your old familiar surroundings.

And then you remember that you were on this meditation retreat, or whatever we want to call it. Did I dream all that? It's gone already.

And you were looking forward to it perhaps for quite a while. It was coming towards you as an event. And then it comes, and then it goes.

And all events are like that. So this, our gathering, there's an external form to it, this place, all the people, the words that are spoken. And then, if you want to hang on to the external form of our gathering, then you might feel a little sad that it's coming to an end.

Or, in a few days or weeks' time, you might think back and say, Oh, I was peaceful then.

That was so nice, and now it's gone. But that is forgetting the essence of our gathering.

The essence of our gathering does not lie in the form, the physical location, which is beautiful. But you can't stay in one location forever. You could, but you wouldn't be happy with that either.

The structures, the words, walking from one building to another, the meals, meeting the people, all nice, beautiful. But the essence isn't any of this. The essence is precisely taking you to a deeper place than the form which your life takes externally.

The essence of our gathering is the now. And in 20 years' time, you could pick up a photo that was taken here, of yourself and some other people, and say, Oh, wasn't that wonderful? And then somebody asks, What was that all about?

Well, that it was all about the now. And then the person might ask, Where's that wonderful now now? And the essence, when you look at the photo, the essence of that is here, now, as myself, beyond a mind-based, story-based sense of me.

Because in 20 years' time, things will have been added to the story of me. It will have grown, a longer story of me. But even that won't be fulfilled yet, fulfilling.

There'll still be many things in it that shouldn't have happened. No, it's not complete yet. I need more things.

On the level of story, there's always a sense of incompleteness. But we are here not to complete the story of your life. That'll carry on.

But realize who you are beyond the story, which are the external circumstances, things that happen to you, and continue to happen. So we've stepped out of the story, and you may not be out permanently. You may get drawn in, your complete identification with the world around you, complete identification with your mind, complete identification with reactive patterns.

And so, seriousness, a heaviness, returns into your life. Every little thing matters. And every little thing has the power to upset you.

Oh! And then suddenly you remember, oh, I've lost the now. Where's the now?

And then the mind says, there's no point in even looking for it now, because obviously you're not in a fit state to be at peace. And with all the problems going on around you, there's just no point in even trying. Often you will hear thoughts like that, that your mind is telling you, not now, later.

I haven't got the time to be present now. No. But one good thing that has come out of this gathering is that you no longer completely believe in what your mind is telling you.

And you can watch that. And often it may be telling you things to manipulate you. I'm not saying the mind is your enemy, but it's an entity, a little form that consciousness has taken, and every form wants to persist in it as that form.

It doesn't want to metamorphose, transform. It wants to, but it does anyway. I'm sure the caterpillar, if you ask the caterpillar, would you like to become a butterfly?

It'll say, no way. I'm fine as I am. Because form wants to persist as that form.

There is a momentum and a static thing also wanting, you can see it in, at night you might get tired, but you're not going to bed because the momentum of the mind wants to carry on. And you know you're tired and you would be better off in bed, but you're still doing, because that form has its momentum, it wants to remain. And the opposite happens in the morning.

You need to get, you need to, then you want to stay in bed. That doesn't want to change. You can see it also with children.

Sometimes they don't want to go into the shower or the bath because it's a transition from the dry state to the wet state. But once they are in the wet state, they love it and they don't want to come out. So just examples of forms wanting to persist.

And so to see, and so the mind is a very deep seated form that consciousness has taken and it wants to carry on as that form, as the noisy mind that's in control of your life. And it'll come up with all kinds of justifications why it will and should and must remain in control. So you may remember we started on the first day by saying don't take your mind too seriously while you're here and whatever thoughts may come up, be gentle with it, but don't take it too seriously.

That means don't have your, don't be identified with every movement that comes up in your head and say oh yeah, yeah, oh yeah. And we've been stepping back continuously which is the essence of being present is an inner stepping back from the flux of thought and also an inner stepping back from the flux of emotions. No denial in that.

Simply you take a step back from where you are the observing presence, the witness. And when you step back, that also means you step out of being trapped in those mental formations, mental emotional formations with your sense of self. Otherwise they imprison your sense of self and it gets trapped in those mental emotional formations.

One could say there are many ways of speaking of what this gathering is and has been all about. One way is to say we are here to step out of identification, of seeking a self, of continuing in the illusion that there is a self, a sense of me, a true identity in the continuous flux of the conditioned mental emotional structures which are movements, energy movements of form. Nothing wrong with them, but it's not who you are.

But most people live completely identified with that movement. And so liberation means liberation from that, from being trapped with your sense of self in that. And so it's the stepping back and the stepping out, so to speak.

And the moment you step back from thought and emotional flux, you become present. The portal into that state that steps back is the present moment. And then you are present with, you can watch the flux.

Don't believe in it completely anymore. Especially when it tells you something about yourself or other people or even situations in your life. Whatever it says may have a relative truth in it, but it's relative.

It's a viewpoint, it's a perspective, it's a position. It's never the totality. There's no wisdom in there.

No wisdom in there. Knowledge, yes, a lot of knowledge. Conditioned knowledge, but no wisdom because it's always a positional thing.

One perspective, and there are many other possible perspectives on the same thing. I listened to the speech by the president last night, and it contained a promising statement, and that was, May God grant us wisdom. He didn't say, May God grant us victory, and he didn't say, May God grant us power.

He said, May God grant us wisdom. And so that is a promising statement. But wisdom in our civilization, not just this country, the entire civilization on the planet, is rare.

It's not taught really at any university that I know of, but wisdom is not knowledge. It's not the ability to think faster or to know more or to be able to analyze more quickly. That's all, that's so-called mind power, intelligence, IQ.

Wisdom is the ability to step out of the conditioned into a greater vastness of consciousness, which you know nothing of when you are trapped in the conditioned mind. So the simple, the ability to step back from there into the spaciousness, yes, the stillness of presence, the inner stillness and sense of spaciousness of presence, that is having access to the realm of wisdom. And it's not taught.

There is a continuous increase in knowledge. There's a continuous intensification on one level of identification with mental noise and knowledge, reactivity, and not much is known about wisdom. It's still what this, what I have been talking about here for most people on the planet, which is a completely unknown thing.

And this is amazing. The most important thing for a human being to know, the mainstream culture knows nothing of it. Almost occasionally little glimpses come through here and there.



Even on TV, occasionally little glimpses come through. In the media, occasionally here and there, yes, there's some truth there, some wisdom shining through or a statement inspired by wisdom. But on the whole, yet, it's not taught at schools or universities.

Wisdom 101. Nowhere. And what would an exam look like on wisdom?

Can you become an advanced practitioner of wisdom? Or would you be better at wisdom if you were a complete beginner at it? I remember a book title, another book I haven't read.

Zen Mind Beginner's Mind. It's probably a good book. Well, the title is good.

So that is having access to that realm within yourself. And again, it is not separate from who you are. That realm from where wisdom arises in your life is the essence of your very being.

So it is not some strange place that you visit. You visit it and you realize that's the essence. That's me.

And one way of putting it, I'm giving you just another little pointer. I've used the pointer before. It is also a realm of stillness that is there underneath all the mental noise.

In you can never be destroyed by mental noise. And the moment the mind stops, even for an instant, it's there. But you might not sense it at first because you've been desensitized by the continuous mental noise.

Just like somebody who spends six hours in a discotheque has become desensitized and will not be able to listen to silence when he or she steps out of the discotheque into the stillness of the night, deafened by the noise. And at first you step out and it seems, oh, this is dreadful. The noise has stopped and there's nothing here.

You wouldn't be able to hear the subtle noises of the night and the huge stillness underneath it, the alive stillness. You would have to stay out of the discotheque for quite a while before your ears become attuned to that much more subtle realm. And then you realize it's not just nothingness out here.

It's actually beautiful and sacred, very different from the noises of the discotheque. I have nothing against discotheques. It's just a metaphor for the human mind.

So at first, in many, many, most of you, already even before knowing this, expressed clearly and recognizing the truth of it, because somehow you already knew all this, of course. If you didn't know all this already, you would have gone home by now. You wouldn't have recognized the truth because you wouldn't have been able to listen to it.

You knew it already. So it's just being formulated. And then you say, see it more clearly out there.

Yes. And so you're now more conscious of it. But that state of awareness, stillness, very likely has already been arising in you, perhaps even without you knowing it, because the mind doesn't really recognize it.

To the mind, there's nothing going on here. I mean, what is all this? And so the cessation of thought for a moment, the arising of still, alive, aware presence, just awareness, which is there whenever something new appears in your life, something, let's say, something suddenly pops up out of a box, and there's a moment of looking before the mind finds a label for it.

Anything new that suddenly comes in, or a person suddenly pops up, that moment is a moment of awareness. After a second or so, maybe two, unless that thing is so unfamiliar that the mind cannot immediately label it, in which case the mind would stop for longer. If suddenly an extraterrestrial appeared in front of you, the mind would stop for longer, because it wouldn't perhaps immediately find a label for it.

And so there would be a prolonged awareness. But that is the state of pure awareness before the arising of mental labels. It can also be there after the arising of mental labels.

You no longer are identified with the mental labels, and then they subside, because you're not empowering or energizing the mental labels through your identification with them as me, my belief, my position, my judgment, me. And that gives it enormous power, that identification. Without that identification, it's simply a movement.

It may arise and subside. And then you have the awareness prior to thought and post-after thought. So the ET arises in front of you, and then the mind says something.

What is this? It's weird. I don't know what that is.

And then it stops again. You may also find it when you wake up in the morning, your eyes open, and you look around the room perhaps, and there's a sense of great aliveness throughout your entire being. Presence, aliveness.

The mind hasn't started yet. It hasn't reminded you of your problems yet. You're in that now in which there are no problems.

Undoubtedly, you're in bed, and the light is shining through the curtains, and you're breathing, and there's not a single problem there. You may not be aware of that. It may only last a few seconds.

For some people, it lasts a minute or two, and then gradually the engines of the Titanic start. I learned that very clearly. I was living in a community once, and there was a man who was tortured by his mind continuously.

But when he came out of the bedroom in the morning, came down for breakfast, for the

first three, four, five minutes maximum, his face was unlined. He looked like a newborn with a freshness and a childlike quality, and then he started drinking his coffee. And then his mind started.

He left that moment. He left the now and was suddenly remembering himself, the me and its story, so unhappy and all the problems facing him on that day and the following days. Oh, and then there's that.

Oh, and that, and that. And so the face changed. The tension came back, and he aged 20 years in five minutes.

And then a deadness comes, a non-aliveness, no emanation anymore, gone until the next morning. What a fate, having to live in that way. And this man thought he had problems.

He was fine. Enough food, shelter, pleasant surroundings. He hadn't met Stephen Hawking in his wheelchair.

Unable to move, speak, feed himself, even lift his head. And when I first saw him, how could life deal such, how can fate deal such a cruel blow to a person? It's the most cruel thing fate could do to you, to incapacitate a person totally.

And he accepted. And he accepted, and that most dreadful thing became turned into good. That most dreadful of fates was turned into good through the yes to what is.

And here was this man complaining about his little problems. He hadn't suffered enough yet. He needed to get to a point where he couldn't stand himself anymore, where he couldn't stand that self-inflicted suffering anymore.

And then perhaps, I lost touch with him. We had a few conversations. So it doesn't matter whether you start with the, you could say the identification with the mental-emotional flux as me creates the state of resistance to what is.

Because the me is always unfulfilled and unsatisfied. And it's actually in need of conflict. Because otherwise I don't know who I am anymore.

It's in need of enemies, because otherwise I can't define who I am. And an enemy can be a situation or a person. We all know people who need their worries.

What would they do if they had nothing to worry about? Their whole sense of self would collapse. But to some extent that's true for everyone.

So that is the resisting entity. It refuses to let go. But it's no longer controlling you completely.

Otherwise you wouldn't have come here. At least you wouldn't have stayed all these

days here. So from now on you can watch the phenomenal dance of the universe whether inner as emotions or thoughts or outer as people, situations, events, comings and goings, an adding to and a losing, gain and loss in your life, fluctuation of that.

You can't continuously gain things. You would get enormously heavy. Gain and loss.

And you can allow the flux of forms, within and without. You don't need to change it as such, but the change happens through changing your inner attitude towards it. That's the miracle.

If you go out and try to manipulate one particular area and change that, it could be within yourself. I'm going to fix myself. I'm going to sort that problem out inside myself.

You sort one out and another one pops up. Or you become good at one thing. You cultivate one particular area in your life and then you lose something there.

If you become very effective in one area, then you can't do that anymore and so on. There are hundreds of things that you could do but you won't do. There's infinite possibilities in everybody's life.

Hundreds of forms that could arise in your life, forms that your life could take but won't and others will. And it's all the flux of forms. I call it sometimes your life situation.

Your life situation changes, but your life situation is not your life. That's the essence to know that. If you confuse your life situation with your life and with who you are, then you're lost in your life situation.

You're lost in your mind. You're lost in time, past and future, which is the essence of your life situation. It unfolds through past and future, through time.

There's a past to it. That's your present life situation. Then there's its momentum, the momentum that it has, how it's going to develop.

And some of your life situations may be very good at this time. Things have just been added to you for a while. Others' life situation may be at a so-called state of loss.

It may be called not good. It doesn't matter where your life situation is. That is a continuous flux in any case.

So to know the difference between the phenomenal reality of your life and a deeper reality that is life prior to the world of arising and subsiding phenomena. Where is life? Here, now, not in thought.

When you step back from thought into a state of alert, alive presence, that's life. And it has no form. When I speak about it, it has a form, but in itself it has no form.

It is the formless life. So in the world of the senses, you can only know the life of form. Life, or you could say consciousness, life or consciousness, the one life essence is born into form temporarily.

Billions of life forms, even on this planet and then beyond. Life forms. Life is born into a form and then the form subsides, it dies.

When you look into nature, I was looking at a flower bed the other day and I saw suddenly these flowers, they appear for a few days, beautiful forms. Life incarnates as a flower, one of the many incarnations that the one essence takes is as a beautiful flower and it comes out and goes, and then it withers. Gone.

But before it's gone completely, the next one is already out. Is it a different flower? No, it's basically the same flower.

Again. And then I saw a speeded up version of flowers coming out and even trees coming out of the soil and going. And then the next, the same movement like a heartbeat.

Out and back in. Out and back in. To exist, the root of the word is to stand out.

X Latin for out. Sist, stand out. It comes out of the one and then back in.

Just as your body. Out, back. To see that pulse of life and every form is subject to that.

What is it that it comes out of? The ground of all being. Pure.

All labels are totally inadequate. It's absurd to even say anything about it, but I'm doing it. The ground of all being.

Pure consciousness. Life prior to form. The unmanifested one life.

One could say that is the state before the universe was born, out of which, because nobody, scientists look at it, they postulate a moment when the universe started as an explosion, they think. A big bang. And what did that explosion come out of?

The question arises, what was there before that explosion? And then... Um...

And how long was it before that could happen? All one can say is there was nothing and it came out of nothing and that's the ground of all being. That nothing.

It all must have come out of nothing because if it came out of something, where did that come out of? And that state before the universe was born was never lost. It is even now.

Your very essence. As it is the essence of all other life forms. In one sense, the big bang never really happened.

It just seemed to. So to know that your essence is one, obviously, with the essence of the universe. How could it not be?

You are an inseparable part. So you can know the essence in yourself. Not in a dualistic relationship.

I know it. In language, it appears that way. But you know it as yourself.

And is that hard to find? How could the essence be distant from you? How could it be hard to find if it is the essence of your being?

Well, do I need time? When am I going to... How long does it take me to find?

Time is part of the phenomenal universe. It cannot contribute, cannot help you to find your essence, the timeless essence that you are. It's only when you step out of time that the essence is suddenly there.

How do you step out of time? You say yes to this moment. Surrender to life.

That is surrender to life. When you say yes to the form that this moment takes as a situation, an event, or a person, a deep yes to the form that this moment takes, which changes continuously. This moment now is this gathering, and this moment this afternoon, it'll still be this moment.

You might be sitting in a car or plane. That's the form that this moment takes then, but it's the same now. The form differs.

But no matter what form it takes, and even if you got hijacked, who cares? It's... The form comes to an end at some point, and some people might think, it's too soon, too soon.

It's always too soon when you don't know who you are. Even when you're 95, it'll be too soon. I haven't found myself yet.

It's too soon. It is not... Death is not such a tragedy.

It looks like it when you know nothing but form. So whenever you totally, completely say yes to an arising form, whatever form this now takes, that yes takes you beyond the form, beyond your own form. Why is that?

Because when you react to a form, that reaction is your own form identity strengthening itself. When you resist anything that arises in the now and you react, there is a reacting entity, a me, that through its reaction strengthens its form identity. In other words, each reaction, which is also a denial of the now, it's a non-embracing, it's the opposite of embracing, it's a contraction, it's a reaction, it's a resistance.

Each reaction to whatever arises in the now, whatever form it takes, keeps you trapped more in your form identity, the limited nature of who you think you are, the little me. A non-reaction through surrender to whatever form arises takes you both beyond the limitations of that arising form. You may find yourself in a situation that would usually be called bad, but your surrender to that takes you beyond the limitations seemingly imposed on you by that arising form and the limitations of being trapped in a little me form identity in yourself.

In the case of Stephen Hawkins, which I gave as an example, look at the limitations of that form, of having to live, look at that life situation, couldn't be worse, couldn't possibly get much worse than that. And through acceptance, going beyond the limitations, that seeming limitations of that form. So you always go beyond the world, which is the world of form, through surrendering to what is.

The mind will tell you the opposite. It says you need to battle with the forms in your life. You need to fight.

That keeps you dependent on the forms and you actually strengthen the opposition of forms in your life. In other words, problems get heavier when you are in an antagonistic attitude towards this moment, whatever form arises at this moment. So the mind tells you, fight, struggle, try to make it.

Try harder. Resist. Don't give in.

And so you get, the world becomes denser and denser, heavier and heavier. And in yourself you find the same density of me struggling against all those others. People and situations, what do they all want of me?

They all seem to put obstacles in my path continuously. People and situations, I can't stand people anymore. So surrender to what is.

You can see now how that works. How instead of being at the mercy of external conditions through surrender, which the mind might be telling you, you go beyond the conditions of your life which seem so limited through surrender. That's the miracle.

And what do you surrender to? Only now. Nothing else is needed.

Only this moment. If I ask you to surrender from now on for the rest of your life or the rest of the year, what a task. That's too difficult.

I mean, even the whole day. How am I going to manage that? You have a new problem.

And then the mind thinks back in the evening and says, I didn't surrender very much today. And then you can feel bad about yourself, which to the little me is good because it strengthens your identity. So all that's needed in surrender is just this moment.

Whatever it is. Just this. It's not a lot, this.

It is as it is. And you embrace this. So that's where true power arises.

Power that is not derived from the little me entity, but a deeper power. The power of life. The power of consciousness.

The power of a much greater intelligence than the limited intelligence of the human mind, which you can still use when you need it. That power and then more and more you find that power not just freeing you from unhappiness and suffering, but that power running your life. Moving through you.

And things become easy. They lose their heaviness. So this is what Jesus meant when he said going beyond the I have overcome the world, he said.

But how? What does that mean? What did he mean when he said I have overcome the world?

He didn't have any worldly power or an army or weapons. Not even worldly knowledge. He probably knew less in terms of knowledge than any person in this room, because there wasn't that much knowledge at his time.

So on that level, he didn't have power. Obviously, what does that statement mean? I have overcome the world.

Well, this is what it means. That the phenomenal world was free of dependency on form. So when I say the dance continues, that is not a bad thing.

When you leave here, the dance of form, in India they have little deities expressing that dance with lots of arms. Well, I think that's what they do. The dance of form continues and it's not really threatening anymore when you know the truth of who you are beyond form, but you cannot know it as an accumulated thing in your mind.

It can only be known continuously in the aliveness of now. That's knowing the truth. It can never be made into knowledge that you accumulate.

It's a continuous knowing, which can only happen now, in this moment. Knowing who you are is not an achievement that is in the past. No certificate is possible that says self-knowledge acquired on such and such a date.

So when you know who you are, knowing it every moment, this moment, as the alert, still, alive presence beyond thought, that then the world of form becomes quite enjoyable, actually, because you have a greater spaciousness that you are in which all that happens. More and more you live as the space in which the world happens. Basically, it means you are the now in which it happens.



You're not what happens. You're not the thought that happens. You're not the emotion that happens, that comes and goes.

You're not the event that happens, the situation that you find yourself in. You're none of that. If you think you are, that's delusion.

You're not what happens. You are the space in which it happens. When you know that through surrendering to what is, life becomes quite enjoyable.

The world of form, the life of form is also quite enjoyable, the dance, and you know everything comes and goes. You don't need any one form and cling to it because it gives you your sense of self. I mustn't go.

I mustn't lose that. And there's not one form that you think you desperately need to complete who you are, and if you don't get that, you are not going to be complete, because the truth is, of course, if you get it for a moment, it satisfies you, and then you'll be unhappy again. And if you don't get it, you'll be unhappy.

In either case, you'll be unhappy. If you get what you think is going to make you complete, you'll be unhappy. The very thing will make you unhappy, or it'll leave you again.

That'll make you unhappy. So you're never going to find it there. But then you play with the world of form.

Instead of having a deadly, serious relationship with the world and your life situation, and there's a desperation about it, I've got to make it, and I might not make it, what then? And you depend on all these other people and what they tell you, whether you've made it or not. And we are waiting for a mad world to confirm to you that you're okay.

So instead of that dead seriousness, a more playful quality comes into your life, in which you still honor the world of form. Not that you say, I'm not paying attention anymore to any form, anything to do with it, I'll stop showering, and I'm not interested anymore. Just, I'm done with all that.

No, you can, you honor the world of form for what it is, because the essence of each form, each life form, is one with your essence. There is an essence in each life form, this leaf. So be careful with that word.

The formless one life, which is the essence. And you honor each form because you see that ultimately sacred essence in each form. And so, you have a loving relationship even to the world of form.

You do not become a hater of the world of form. Some ascetics have gone that way. They saw there was a glimpse of a certain reality, that there is something deeper than

the world of form.

But some became haters of the world of form in the search for a more complete realization of that one reality. But hating the world of form doesn't take you there. Honoring and giving it its due.

So each form is honored and that particularly applies to other humans. Because a lot of the forms of life that you meet will be human forms. And your life situation is determined to a large extent by the human forms in your life.

And so they are honored. And when do they come into your life? In the now.

No human being can come into your life that's not in the now. And what do you do in the now? You accept the is-ness of this moment.

This being. No matter what this being says or does. That's the way.

That's what is. You might say, no, no can come out of your mouth and there's complete yes internally. A car pulls up and a drunk driver says, come on, I'll give you a ride.

And you don't say yes to that moment and get in the car. You see, you say, no, thank you. And you better get out of the car too.

Laughter But there's no reactivity. There's no little entity saying, you shouldn't be saying this. You shouldn't.

You should know better. Fighting. There's a strange thing is whatever you do in a non-fighting way is actually more effective.

Because any fighting creates more opposition. It doesn't mean you cannot defend yourself. If somebody comes at you with an axe, perhaps you raise your arm or you hit back.

Nobody can predict when you're present what you will do. You don't need a set of principles in your head anymore when you live in presence according to which you act. Right action arises out of surrender to what is.

And you don't need some abstract principles to guide you anymore. You need those when you're not connected with who you are. So questions like, should we, is it ever right to be violent or to even physically defend yourself or to save somebody or many people to kill somebody.

These questions are hypothetical. The right thing will always emerge out of the state of presence. Right action emerges out of the state of presence.

and that is yes to the suchness of this moment. And then perhaps action is required. It

comes out of the yes, not out of the contracted state of no, which is a little me.

So there's the that's the secret of life. For some strange reason it's a secret. I don't know why it's there.

I'm not an advocate of conspiracy theories but it almost looks if it were a conspiracy, let's keep the secret of life a secret. Let's not teach our children that. Let's not teach it at universities.

Let's cram their heads full of useless knowledge but the secret is out now. Let's forget about the questions that you may still have or had yesterday. All the questions, if they are vital, you will know the answers from within.

If they are not vital, they'll dissolve. So enjoy the dance of your life situation. The life situation does not need to change.

You no longer have the need for it to change so that you can be okay. You're okay already now. And then watch the miracle unfold and be completely wherever you are.

It's the now. It's your home. Sitting in the car, sitting at an airport, sitting on a plane, sitting at home, sitting in the office, walking, standing, lying.

Of course, you'll be somewhere and it'll be in the now. It doesn't really matter where you walk or sit or stand or lie. You'll be somewhere.

The form will be somewhere and it'll be okay. Enjoy the passing scenery, situations, people. The only way to enjoy this externalized life of form is if you don't need it anymore to make you happy.

Then you can truly enjoy it. And the strange thing is more nice things tend to happen than when you need it. This has been a wonderful gathering, a wonderful on the surface, five days or whatever it has been, but in reality a wonderful deep one moment.

And there's no reason why your life cannot continue to be a wonderful deep one moment. It is. It is.

So you have already arrived. There's still an external seemingly a journey, a movement through space and time, but you have already arrived internally. You may occasionally forget that.

That's okay too. You won't forget it for very long. So as far as your outer life is concerned, send blessings on your journey through space and time and welcome home.

Thank you.